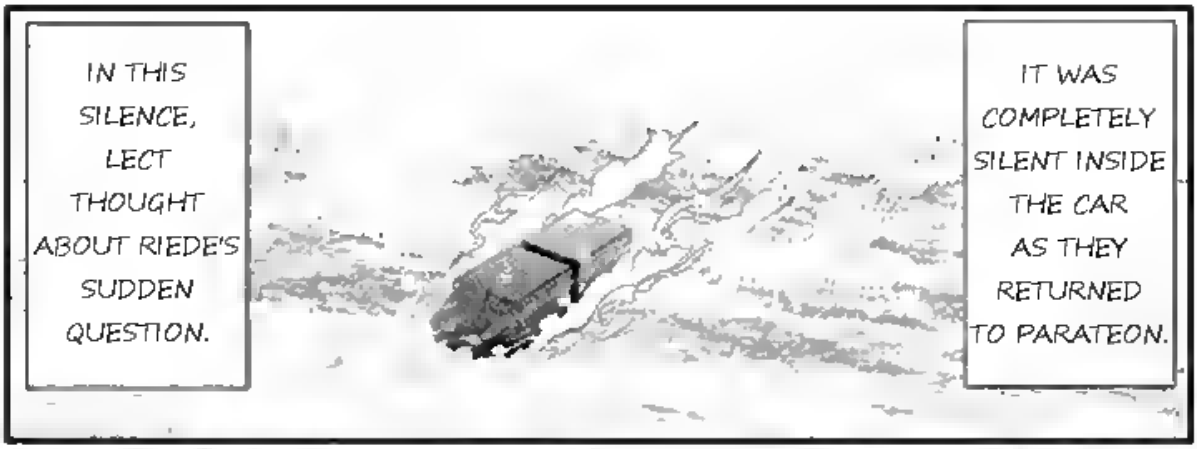
IN THIS SILENCE, LECT THOUGHT ABOUT RIEDE'S SUDDEN QUESTION.
IT WAS COMPLETELY SILENT INSIDE THE CAR AS THEY RETURNED TO PARATEON.

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白の皇国物語 第三十九回
原作：白沢戌亥 漫画：小二まーゆ

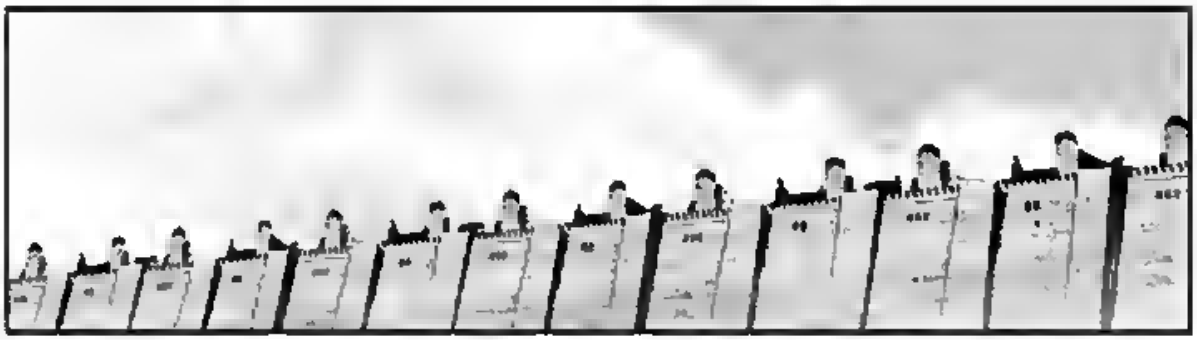
YOU LAID YOUR LIVES DOWN TO PROTECT.
WE HERE HAVE INHERITED THAT WHICH
.....
ON THE MORNING AFTER LECT AND RIEDE RETURNED A FUNERAL CEREMONY WAS HELD.
MY COMRADES,

WE WILL CARRY ON THE PRIDE
THAT YOU HELD ONTO IN YOUR CHESTS.

YOU PROTECTED EVERYTHING
THAT IS BEING REFLECTED IN MY SWORD NOW.
YOUR VICTORY WILL SHINE IN THE HEAVENS FOR SO LONG AS OUR KINGDOM REMAINS.
100

AND WE WILL CONTINUE TO
DEFEND THAT WHICH LIES BEHIND YOU!
MY COMRADES, IN THIS TIME OF PEACE,
YOU CAN HEAD TOWARDS WHERE THE PREVIOUS KINGS ARE.
EVERY-ONE!

SALUTE OUR COMRADES!
THE VEHICLES CARRYING THE NOW SILENT COMRADES MOVED FORWARD, AS IF PUSHED BY THE FUNERAL MARCH.
THE SOLDIERS SHED TEARS AS THEY SAW OFF THE SPIRITS OF THEIR FRIENDS.



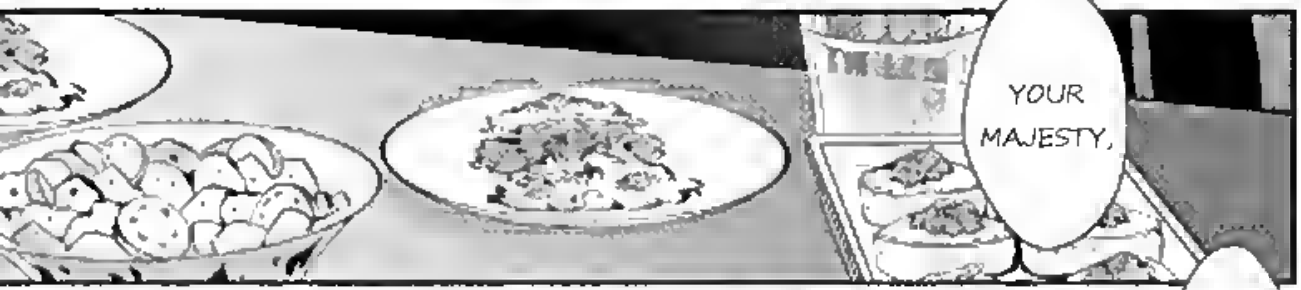
I NEED TO GIVE RIEDE MY ANSWER BY TONIGHT...

IT DOESN'T LOOK LIKE ANYTHING HAS CHANGED FOR HER...

THAT'S RATHER SEVERE, BUT I SUPPOSE THIS IS ANOTHER OBSTACLE FOR ME TO OVERCOME.

NOW THEN, HOW SHOULD I RESPOND...
YOUR MAJ-ESTY,
IT IS CUSTOMARY TO LET EVERYONE DRINK AS THEY PLEASE ON THE NIGHT OF A FUNERAL,
SO THERE WILL BE ALCOHOL PREPARED FOR RIEDE AS WELL...
THANK YOU FOR ATTEND-ING THE FUNERAL.
OKAY...
OH...

PLEASE GO AHEAD.
INDEED,
IT'S TASTY.
IT'S GOVERN-MENT ISSUED, BUT I WOULD SAY IT ISN'T TOO BAD.
YOU SHOULD SIT DOWN TOO, RIEDE.
YES.


YOUR MAJESTY,

I...

UNTIL NOW I HADN'T REVEALED THAT PART OF ME TO ANYONE...

I WAS AWARE OF IT, YET I SAID IT ANYWAYS.

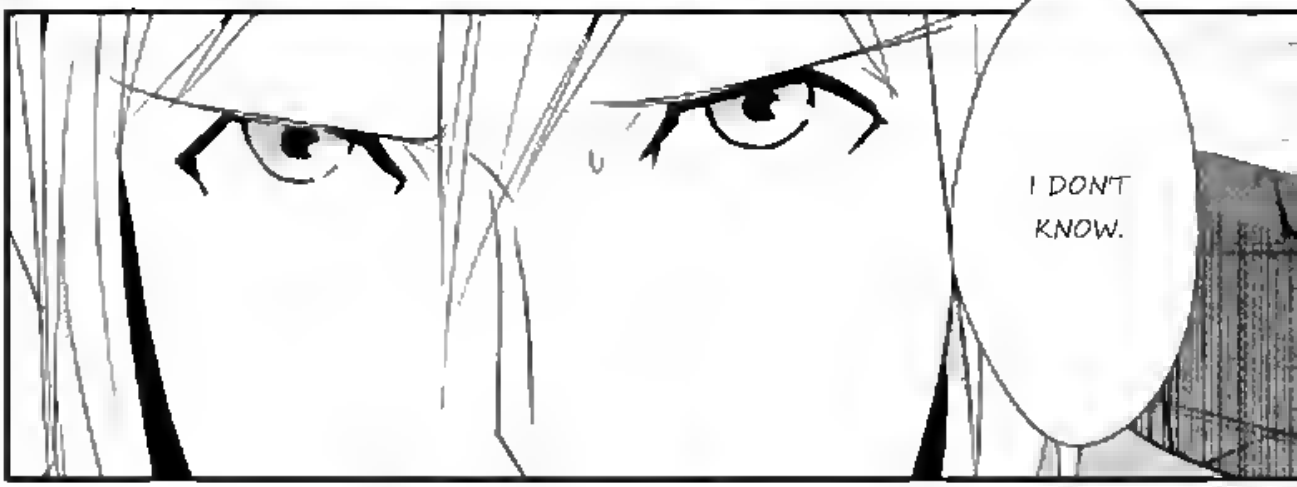
I'M AWARE OF HOW RUDE I WAS.
APOLOGIZE FOR WHAT I SAID YESTERDAY.

I UNDERSTAND HOW I TROUBLED YOU.
YOU COULD HAVE SIMPLY REPORTED THAT DISRESPECTFUL OUTBURST AND HAD ME JUDGED FOR IT,
YET...
YOU ARE THE REGENT AND THE MAN WHO WILL BECOME THE KING...

AFTER TOMORROW IT WILL LIKELY BE IMPOSSIBLE TO SPEAK TO YOU LIKE THIS.
BASED ON THAT,
I DECIDED THAT NOW WAS THE BEST TIME TO SAY ALL THAT...
MY HATRED FOR THIS MUDDLED COUNTRY, AND HOW I FEEL ABOUT MY FATHER...
YOUR HIGH NESS...

RIGHT...
VERY WELL THEN.
YESTERDAY'S QUESTION?
カラン
COULD YOU ANSWER

I'M SORRY.


I DON'T KNOW.

HUH?

... WHAT?!
I ASKED A ONCE IN A LIFETIME QUESTION,
HOLD ON!
?
一生懸命
I REALLY DID THINK ABOUT IT...
けど
AND HE...
YOUR HIGH-NESS!
ARE YOU REALLY FINE LIKE THIS?!
YOU WILL BECOME KING ONCE DAY!
HE DOESN'T KNOW?!

IF YOU CANNOT ABANDON A SOLDIER, HOW WILL YOU PROTECT THE ENTIRE COUNTRY?!
AS A HERO - NO, A REGENT IS NO DIFFERENT.
YOU SHOULD PICK THE COUNTRY!
I AM PREPARED TO LAY DOWN MY LIFE IF IT'S FOR THE COUNTRY!
RIEDE,

CAN I
JUST SWEAR TO DECIDE ON IT WHEN IT ACTUALLY COMES TO THAT?
OF COURSE! THAT'S WHAT YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO DO!
BUT...

I DON'T WANT TO MAKE LIGHT OF THE FEELINGS AND DREAMS EVERYONE HAS IN THEIR FINAL MOMENTS
BY MAKING EXCUSES IN MY MIND LIKE THERE BEING NO ALTERNATIVES OR IT JUST COMING DOWN TO DUTY.
I MAY BE THE REGENT, BUT I AM AN ORDINARY MAN BEFORE THAT.
BOTH YOUR FATHER AND THE COMRADES YOU SAW OFF TODAY
PROBABLY THOUGHT OF THEIR LOVED ONES
AS THE MADNESS OF DEATH CLOSED IN ON THEM.
SO

I WANT TO BEAR THAT SIN WHEN THE TIME COMES FOR IT.
IF IT HELPS YOU COPE,
RESENT ME AS MUCH AS YOU WISH.
IT'S MY DUTY TO BEAR IT.
SO RESENT ME,

ARE YOU REALLY CAPABLE OF SUPPORTING THIS COUNTRY?!
DON'T JUST ACT COOL ALL OF A SUDDEN!
I-I'M SORRY THAT I COULDN'T GIVE YOU A PROPER ANSWER.

THAT WAS GOOD ENOUGH... YOUR HIGHNESS...
NO...
WILL YOU REALLY ACCEPT MY DEATH WHEN THE TIME COMES AND NOT RUN AWAY?
RIEDE...
IF YOU DIED...
BUT IF I DIED, WOULD YOU BE SADDENED BY IT?
... THIS IS JUST A HYPO-THETICAL QUESTION,

I'D THINK BACK TO THIS NIGHT AND CRY.
I WOULD CRY AS I THOUGHT ABOUT HOW WARM YOU FELT NOW.
IN THE END, I'M JUST ANOTHER SOLDIER...
AFTER YOU LEAVE TOMORROW, WE'LL PROBABLY NEVER MEET AGAIN.
ギュ

ANYTHING CAN HAPPEN IN THE FUTURE. A COINCIDENCE MAY JUST BE A FATED ENCOUNTER.
AT THE VERY LEAST,
YOU NEVER KNOW.
SO THEN
IF I WAS ABLE TO.
I WOULD LIKE TO GRANT YOUR WISH

IT'S FINE TO HOPE FOR THAT?
CAN I HOPE TO REMAIN BY YOUR SIDE?

I'M SURE YOUR DAUGHTER IS HAPPY RIGHT NOW...
CHILDREN GROW UP IN THE BLINK OF AN EYE...
GALIAN,
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